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## Unum Group Q1 2008 Earnings Call Transcript

### Question-and-Answer Session

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Thank you. [Operator Instruction]. And we will take our first question with Colin Devine with Citi. Please go ahead.

**Colin Devine - Citigroup**

Good morning.

**Thomas R. Watjen - President and Chief Executive Officer**

Good morning, Colin.

**Colin Devine - Citigroup**

Couple of questions, just to sort of flush out what's going on... sort of as you continue transform that... the U.S. business and I was wondering if Kevin is around to talk a bit about case counts to give us a sense of really just... from your customer base how is that changing, perhaps just you got Susan on the line, she could also talk about what's going on in the UK in that respect? And also if we could talk a bit about the benefit ratio, just expand is... as you noted the expense ratio is going to start to come up as the mix changes, what's driving the benefit ratio down? Is it the improvements in the back office, the repricing or is it partially a function of the mix? And then lastly, where are the Close Blocks, if you can maybe just give us some sense of what a realistic earnings run rate for it is now that has been securitized and you have taken some of the assets out of that?

**Thomas R. Watjen - President and Chief Executive Officer**

Good. Colin, good question. Maybe, Kevin, I'll just ask you to start on the case count for Unum U.S., as well let me just tie into that the benefit ratio piece and then we will come to Susan on the question for the UK.

**Kevin P. McCarthy - President, Unum US**

Great. Good morning, Colin. Case count for the quarter was up 31% and Unum U.S., really, really strong results following our fourth quarter results and core premium of course and associated with that case count was up 37%. So the momentum that we established in the second half of '07 continued in terms of customer acquisition. And by the way, case persistency was up also in the quarter. So overall, customer acquisition and retention is going very well. On the group income protection loss ratio improvement, incidence was stable in the quarter, recoveries were slightly improved and I think that drove some of the improvement, certainly mix and continued success in our renewal program also drove some of improved results.

**Thomas R. Watjen - President and Chief Executive Officer**

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